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No. 1119/67

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
22 June 1967

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Danish Prime Minister's Venture
Into International Diplomacy

1. The decision of Prime Minister Jens Otto Krag (he also holds the Foreign Ministry portfolio) to attend the special session of the United Nations General Assembly has aroused considerable speculation in Denmark and the other Scandinavian countries about the purpose of the visit. In this respect, Krag is out of step with the leaders of the Norwegian, Swedish, and Finnish governments who decided to hold off sending high-ranking representatives to the meeting until it became clearer whether the session would turn into a Soviet propaganda side show or lead to serious substantive discussions of the Middle East crisis.

2. Krag's rationale was that the anticipated "diatribes" of the Soviets should be met by spokesmen of high rank. He probably also thought that since Denmark's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Hans Tabor, holds the Security Council presidency during June, this placed special responsibility on the Danish Government to try to facilitate settlement of the dispute.

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Denmark favors direct Israeli-Arab negotiations and believes that Israel might be encouraged to return conquered territory in return for freedom of passage in the Gulf of Aqaba and the Suez Canal. As a way out of the impending General Assembly impasse, however, the Danes are considering proposing a brief, non-substantive resolution in place of both the US and Soviet texts that would refer the problem back to the Security Council and call

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for appointment of a special representative of the UN or Secretary General to contact the parties involved. The Danes believe the Egyptians are receptive to the idea of a go-between and are willing to sound out the Israelis.

4. Another factor which influenced Krag is the belief held by many Danes that Denmark, as a small country with a respected international image, has a role to play in smoothing relations between the East and West. The Danish Government would probably be eager to have one of its representatives play the role of "honest broker" or intermediary, if one is needed at this particular time. It is probably with this in mind that Krag met with Premier Kosygin on 19 June and will meet with President Johnson on 23 June.

5. In making the trip to New York, Krag may also have certain domestic political considerations in mind. At home his Social Democratic government and party (of which he is chairman) are in some trouble, as the elections last November clearly indicated. The government he heads is in a minority position in parliament, and the Social Democratic Party is faced with continuing defections to the parties on both the left and the right. In order to stem the defections--particularly to the leftist Socialist People's Party (SPP)--he is currently trying the expedient of limited parliamentary cooperation with the SPP despite opposition in both parties to this arrangement. Growing disunity over this issue in the SPP, however, is threatening the "Socialist majority" which has put through some significant domestic legislation. Without the SPP's solid support, Krag's government may not be able to continue unless he makes such sweeping concessions to the SPP radicals on foreign policy that his own party would disown him.

6. Some observers have also interpreted Krag's foray into international diplomacy as a move to recoup his political fortunes by demonstrating to the Danes that they have a government leader who moves in the highest circles of international politics and has access to leaders of both the US and the Soviet Union.

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Approved For Release 2001/03/22 : CIA-RDP79T00826A002200020001-9

☐ NOTICE NO 62-67

COVER SHEET

☒ DISSEM AUTHORIZATION

MEMO NO 1119/67

DATE 22 June 67

Due

D/OCI Review

Dates:

Dissem 22 June 67

SUBJECT: Danish Prime Minister's Venture Into International Diplomacy

REQUESTED OR ORIGINATED BY: Self-initiated

PURPOSE: For Krag's Visit With the President on Friday 23 June.

ASSIGNED TO: WE/ [REDACTED] GRAPHICS

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